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A Desperate Situation

IN the autumn of 1940 some of us found ourselves under the regrettable necessity of opposing efforts to take food to the populations in the occupied areas of Europe. The Germans had despoiled these peoples of their supplies, and it was their obligation to care for them. To send food was to ease Germany's task, and the British Government was determined not to lift its blockage to admit any supplies which directly or indirectly could aid the ruthless oppressors. Mr. Hoover was the protagonist in an attempt to do this, although his representatives had been flatly told of the opposition of the British authorities. His efforts to rouse American public feeling to coerce Britain imperiled the relations between Britain and ourselves at a time when it was all-important that the two nations should be drawn more closely together and this country led to assume her place as a belligerent against the enemies of human freedom and justice.

Today, after two years, the situation is radically different. The need is much more acute. The peril of dividing sentiment in this country from that in Britain no longer exists. British churchmen, as well as churchmen in this country, are agreed that something must be done at once for the children and the sick in the distressed lands. The example of what has already been done for the starving people in Greece, to which ships have gone and where supplies have been distributed under trustworthy neutral supervision, is evidence that help can be given without aiding the conquerors. It is now imperative that similar measures be taken for Belgium, for Norway and possibly for other areas.

The organized governmental agency headed by former Governor Herbert Lehman is the logical means through which Americans can work. Approaches have been made both to the British authorities and to our own State Department. Necessary funds are already available. As in the case of Greece, strict precautions would be enforced to guarantee that no assistance accrues to the enemy. What is contemplated is no general feeding of the popu-

lation, but the sending of powdered milk and vitamins essential to maintain the health of children and of invalids. This will not require many ships, for a vast lot of such non-bulky supplies can be packed into a single cargo.

It is urgent that such help be immediately forwarded. The accounts of the plight of these lands are harrowing. We cannot hold the friendship of people whose children are suffering and dying unless we put forth every effort for their relief. Nor is it of much avail to bring freedom to an enslaved nation where the rising generation who would most profit by it have been either starved to death or left human wrecks through malnutrition. War is always terrible, nor can we abate its terrors at the cost of leaving tyranny victorious but here is a chance to save thousands of young lives in order that they may enjoy the liberties for which our sons are enduring hardship, wounds and death, and for which we are all gladly sacrificing.

It is known that officials of highest rank in both the British and American Governments favor the measures which are proposed. Indications by Christian people of their grave concern over the plight of their starving Allies will be welcomed and may further speedy action. It is to be hoped that many readers of *Christianity and Crisis* will seize the occasion to write to the President, to Governor Lehman, and to the State Department. Communications should be disassociated from broad schemes for general relief, and from proponents of such schemes whose support of the Allied cause is or has been questionable. They should advocate the specific measures requested by the governments of the occupied nations, the sending of limited quantities of powdered milk and vitamins for administration to children and nursing mothers, under the supervision of a neutral Red Cross Commission.

There is reason to believe that Government decisions may be taken within the next few weeks. Therefore, prompt action is important.

HENRY SLOANE COFFIN.

The Just War of Unjust Nations

EDUARD HEIMANN

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, in his second Inaugural, gave an interpretation of the Civil War. We read therein: "Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Each looked for an easier triumph and a result less fundamental and astounding. . . . The Almighty has His own purposes. 'Woe unto the world because of offenses! For it must needs be that offenses come but woe to the man by whom the offense cometh.' If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to him?"

No more penetrating analysis of the present conflict can be found. The woe is this terrible war; the offense is ours, it is the democracies' injustice and selfishness. The war, of course, has been caused by Nazi and Japanese aggression; but they could not be as formidable as they are if we had not nourished them. They live on the injustice and selfishness of the democracies.

The rise of Hitlerism is no accident. We must not look for a scapegoat. It is true that there are special sources of Hitlerism in German history and tradition. But without them there would still be some kind of Hitlerism today. Sinister forces are always lying in wait in the depths of the individual soul as in those of society. Today civilized society has lost control of them. This is only another way of saying that they arise from, and reflect, the weakness of the democracies. Had the democracies been what they are supposed to be, they would have been impregnable. Our defects gave Hitler and his allies their chance.

And it is general defects of the democracies which are thus responsible. None of them kept clear of such defects. They all, from Republican Germany to the United States, made their contribution towards the rise of Hitlerism. All established schools of thought tried their hands at Hitler and all failed, from the Tories to Labor and from the Vatican to the Kremlin. This is a remarkable display of the

universality of guilt but it must not be taken to prove that if all the guilty parties resolved to be just from now on, Hitler would be undone. We cannot, in fact, purge ourselves of our past guilt without dealing with the overt evil of Nazism which the sins of our past have made possible.

We shall deal with the various aspects of this universal guilt under several headings:

Unemployment

We, the democracies, permitted unemployment to develop, to spread, and to persist. There is no more humiliating plight for a decent man than to be barred from making a living, depend on charity, and be deprived of the respect and self-respect that come from a job well done. This plight is bound to destroy human and social stability. It drove German youth into the ranks of communism and then into those of the still more vocal Nazis. It shook the belief in democracy everywhere and produced the Fifth Column in peace and war. It gave the totalitarians their great opportunity.

Unemployment arises because certain private properties have long since ceased to be private. A property is private if and because what the owner does affects only him and his family. A farmer is a private owner. But a big corporation is not, because what it does directly affects the employment or unemployment of tens or hundreds of thousands and, through market connections, of millions of others, dependent and independent workers. Private property can claim freedom from governmental interference, since it does not interfere with the "general welfare," of which the government is custodian. Big corporations do so interfere.

Their main field is the heavy industries, that is, the production of machines and buildings. This branch of production can be fully utilized only under special conditions, only if and when the industrial system continues to grow and to require more and more machines. For, every machine lives a number of years, and next year's output of machines will not replace this year's but will be added to it. But this is a self-exhausting process, bound to slow down as a point of relative saturation comes into sight and the stimuli of population growth and of revolutionary technological innovations slacken.

In the Great Depression, consumer's goods indus-

tries operated at 80% of capacity or more, but the steel industry at 14%. As employees were dismissed, their demand for consumers' goods shrunk, and the crisis spread. But its focus was the heavy industries and their financial superstructure. It follows that a far-sighted regulation of heavy industry must provide for employment.

With the right overtly hostile and the left looking on in arrogant aloofness, the Roosevelt administration did what it could to institute a minimum of additional employment through public works. We did not succumb as the German republic had done; we managed to keep afloat. But under the circumstances we could not do more. We did not steal the show from the dictators. Planning for full employment seemed to be a dictatorial achievement.

For Hitler understood the problem and mastered it. Without formally abolishing private property, as the Soviet had done, he subjected it to his orders and accomplished full employment, first on the rebuilding of cities, later on the building of his huge military machine. He rescued the people from their desperation and tied their loyalty to his program of world conquest. He thus gained the huge advantage in military preparedness which has brought the world to the brink of catastrophe. He did it by using for his ends the instrument of economic planning which the democracies had neglected to use for democratic ends.

The ironical result is that the economic planning we spurned, when it was needed for the sake of democracy, is now thrust on us by military necessity.

Chaos in Southeastern Europe

Exactly the same reasoning applies to European reconstruction. Here is another democratic omission turned into a fascist opportunity.

The peace treaties of 1919, inasmuch as they affected Germany, were not half so far-reaching and base as American isolationism and Nazi propaganda would have us believe. By far the greatest change which the treaties brought was the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Several new states were carved out of it, others were enlarged by pieces carved out of it. The guiding principle in the reorganization was the Wilsonian principle of national self-determination.

But each one of these states became multinational; state lines cannot be drawn in that region without creating national minorities. This is one consequence of the previous, however obsolete, unity of all these peoples under the old monarchy. In addition, coming as they did from that unity, they were unable to make a living in separation. Their rabid mutual hostility made matters worse.

What was vitally needed was outside leadership in organizing cooperation. A new unity should have been established to replace the Hapsburg monarchy. And it should have been integrated into a more comprehensive organization for mutual protection and aid. Wilson perfectly understood the need for a comprehensive organization of peace and aid, although none of the peace-makers realized the need for a special Danubian organization. But Wilson's positive program was disavowed by the new and rising American isolationism, and the League was doomed from the very outset. For, as America had been needed to win the war, so the peace could not be secured without her—this was in the nature of an arithmetical problem. Left alone by the United States, France and England quarreled, and France, exhausted by the war and scared by the new unsolved problems, turned her back on the small states which depended on her for protection as well as for credits and for the sale of their products. France abandoned the Southeast to Hitler.

This is a perfect parallel to the unemployment case. The small Danubian states were drawn into the German economic orbit, they supplied raw materials to the Nazi military machine, their food supplies enabled Germany to shift more workers into the production of arms. Thus, however, reluctantly, those small states helped make Hitler great. To force them to do this was the second contribution of the democracies towards the growth of Hitler.

Pacifism

Once Hitler had been permitted to become a formidable power, he and his Axis partners were further strengthened by the interplay of pacifism and appeasement policy throughout the world.

Pacifism was the ruling philosophy in all Western countries in the thirties. It dominated the German socialists, whom Hitler overwhelmed without a fight. In France the slogan, "war is worse than tyranny," dominated the teachers' union and through it the intellectual attitude of the left. The French learned too late that tyranny is worse than war, because it adds war to its other evils. In Britain, eleven million people, out of a total population of 45 millions, pledged themselves in a private canvass never to take up arms. In the United States, the Congress went so far as to legislate neutrality in advance, i.e., to forbid itself to help Europe against Hitler, or China against the Japanese.

Pacifism denotes an unselfish will to peace and a readiness to make sacrifices to this end. Pacifism flows from a deep and uncompromising devotion to the idea of peace; it may be irrespective of consequences, but it is anything but ungenerous and ig-

noble. One can study it in the Quakers, who, while declining participation in armed conflict, do not refuse hard and dangerous service as a demonstration of their brotherly love. That there be such pacifism, as a reservation in the midst of turmoil, is all to the good.

But pacifism must not be absolutized into a political program. There is a world of difference between the religious pacifism and the political pacifism which teaches that the unjust and selfish man might suddenly be good and thus avoid that war which is only the consequence of his injustice and selfishness. Political pacifism is absurd because it ignores the nature of man and the logic of history; its effect is invariably to favor the aggressor, and it did favor the Nazis and the Japanese.

It is particularly unfortunate that, in this country, the great majority of churchmen, whose task it is to watch over the standards of judgment, indulged in the absurd confusion of religious and political pacifism, right up to Pearl Harbor. They preached that America should demonstrate her Christian virtue and peaceableness by keeping aloof from the ordeal into which her greed and carelessness had helped to plunge the Chinese, British, and Russians, and for that matter, the Axis peoples as well. It is as true as ever that he who would save his life shall lose it!

Pacifism is at least as much responsible for our plight as is pro-fascist appeasement policy. The British and French labor parties joined their Tories and appeasers in the decision not to oppose seriously the march of the fascist powers into the Rhineland, Abyssinia, Spain, and Austria. The American Congress refused to fortify the Pacific outposts. So powerful was the sway of pacifism over public opinion, so deep did it penetrate even into traditionally conservative groups that paradoxically, the imperialistic countries of Western Europe permitted their armaments to lapse. It is true that the British and French appeasers wanted to capitulate to Hitler at Munich in order to turn his aggression against the Soviet; but had they wanted to resist him, they would not have been able to do it because their countries were totally unprepared. Even the British Navy entered the war with hardly more than half the number of destroyers which it had in 1914. The disastrous identification of social reformism with pacifism has been broken only in the person of President Roosevelt.

Appeasement

The dividing line between political pacifism and pro-facist appeasement policy is not always easy to draw. The Chamberlain government, with which the

name of appeasement is principally connected, showed its earnest will to peace by handing over to the Irish the strategic ports which the British still held in Eire under the treaty that gave Eire its freedom.

But the appeasers, in Britain as elsewhere, did try to make a deal with Hitler, at the expense of little Czechoslovakia and of the giant Soviet. They regarded Hitler as a godsend, who, by destroying the Soviet, would save their class prerogatives from the communist menace. They hoped the Soviet would be crushed between the pincers of the white and the yellow Aryans. It did pay to make concessions to him in order to strengthen his might against the Soviet.

The Catholic Church welcomed Hitler and Mussolini into Spain, in the hope that they would restore her hold on the country. Gradually, from the results of this policy, did the Church come to realize that Hitler and Mussolini flattered her only to cheat her as soon as the power was theirs. The Church came to realize that the fascists are anti-Christian in an even more profound sense than the communists, because the latter believe in the Christian values of peace and justice as the ultimate standards of political action, while the fascists mock these standards as unvirile and degenerate. The fact that they do should never have been a secret to the Church.

In France, the appeasers had their way; they overthrew the republic and capitulated to Hitler. In Britain, the appeasers were overthrown by the rising wrath of the people. In our own country, appeasement was kept under control as far as our relations with Hitler were concerned, but was triumphant during several years of our relations with Japan. While the Chinese were bleeding for us as well as for their own liberty, we made profitable deals with the Japanese and supplied them with the steel and oil, without which they could not have staged the war in China or the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Imperialism

This war has often been denounced as a war of imperialism. It is one. This is no justification for Japan's aggression; she has destroyed the highly developed native civilization of Korea, has been trying to do the same thing to China, and is now bent on wrestling from the Western empires countries farther south. But this, again, is no excuse for the Western democracies, whose imperialism has engendered so much enmity.

The Monroe Doctrine, for a hundred years, was regarded as a declaration of Yankee imperialism and dollar diplomacy by all peoples south of the Rio Grande. No wonder that, with all the moral progress made by our good neighbor policy in recent

years, suspicion still lurks everywhere and breaches the system of hemisphere defense.

It is a shining tribute to our recent policy that the Filipinos fought as they did under the banners of MacArthur and Wainwright. They understand that under our protection they are expected and helped to develop self-rule, the only justifiable goal of foreign domination. The contrast between events in the Philippines and those in British Burma is telling.

But let no one believe that we are not still supplying the Japanese with ample material for their propaganda against us. The white man's racial arrogance is the main theme on which the Japanese keep harping throughout Asia and among the Indians of South America, principally Peru. They refer to discrimination in every town of the United States, in our armed forces, and even in many locals of our labor unions, both AF of L and CIO, which exclude Negroes from membership and thereby from employment. It is a real blessing that our heavy indebtedness to and reliance on the indomitable Chinese make it impossible for us to let this war degenerate into a war against the yellow race. The tragic persecution of our co-citizens of Japanese ancestry on the West coast, in indisputed violation of our sacred Bill of Rights, shows the gravity of the danger.

Public opinion in this country is inclined to ignore all this and blame the British for racial arrogance in their empire. The blame is fully deserved, but it must be correctly understood. Just as we could not simply get out of the Philippines and leave them to their own fate and the Japanese, so the British cannot simply get out of India, whatever Indian nationalists and Axis propagandists may tell us. The breakdown of the recent Hindu-Moslem negotiations conducted under the mediation of Sir Stafford Cripps made that quite clear. There is no parallel in the world to the irrationality of the Indian political jungle, with its hundreds of languages, nationalities, and religions, its castes and classes, its tradition of separate units and its lack of a unifying concept or program. It seems that Britain's sins in India are primarily in the past, in playing up the factional dissensions among the Indians and thereby prolonging the necessity of British rule. But the Indians too, have made their contribution to the stale-mate; they are unable to make British rule superfluous by presenting a program on which the quarreling factions can unite, and Ghandi's pacifism found the prospect of Indian independence contingent upon India's participation in the war unacceptable. Now that the British solution of the Indian problem proves too weak in this age of mass warfare, the result of Indian quarrels and British reluctance is that the Indian solution is not yet ripe. The task

of lending a helping hand will devolve on us; let us hope we are better prepared.

More generally, white imperialism has proved a hybrid structure. The liberalism of its mother countries could not but benefit the colonies to an extent, varying in the individual cases, by leading them on the way to education and self-rule. This is the unique historical significance of Western imperialism. But this tendency is crossed by racial arrogance and exploitation. It is a horrible charge, both foreign and domestic, on which we have now to pay an interest in terms of blood.

Communism

Our survey of the sins of the Western world would be incomplete if it did not include communism. The communists had been engaged in open collusion with the Nazis, as the capitalistic appeasers had been. In the war itself and the mortal danger which it brought to the West, they had continued the game until the day when it pleased Hitler to terminate it. They had helped to bring down, first, the German Republic, on the theory, in Stalin's own words, that one had to take into the bargain a few years of Hitler rule in order to get rid of the worst enemies of labor, the Social Democrats and the Christian labor unions. This was not a very perspicacious theory or practice. Taking the lesson to heart, the communists, during the thirties, were ardent supporters of the League of Nations and were rightly disgusted with the half-heartedness and dishonesty of the Western League powers. Finally, when the British and French appeasers pursued, over the dead body of Czechoslovakia, their policy of a pact with Hitler and Mussolini, it was, in a sense, logical for the Soviet to prevent the threat and veer around to her own pact with Hitler. Thus she launched Hitler on his war against the West, which he would not have dared to undergo without the certainty of peace with Russia.

Thereupon the Soviet became Hitler's accomplice in the devilish game of swallowing small nations, at the same time when the British were loyal enough to respect, to their own grievous harm, the neutrality of Norway, Holland, and Belgium, and of Ireland, a British dominion. The Soviet was even prepared to abandon Syria, Palestine and Iraq to Hitler in exchange for a free hand in Iran. But then Hitler stopped the game.

Worst of all, during this entire period, diplomatic collusion was accompanied by the most vicious anti-democratic propaganda of communists all over the world. The seizure of those territories is explained by communists as a strategic precaution; but there

is no excuse for concentrating fire for two years on the democracies alone. The Soviet officially set the theme by declaring in the most formal way that Britain and France were guilty of "criminal aggression" against the Nazis; Stalin personally confirmed the Nazi propaganda slogan that Britain and France had attacked Germany in the interest of their imperialists. German communists, refugees from Nazi savagery, distributed anti-British pamphlets in the streets of London. The *New Masses* of New York appeared on June 23, 1941, with the emphatic assurance that the rumors of a rift between Stalin and Hitler were "capitalistic lies." Hitler's surprise attack on the Soviet was needed before Stalin discovered that Britain was fighting "for the defense of democratic liberty."

We have to subsume the Soviet under two different categories. The Soviet is, on one hand, part of the scourge sent to the democracies as a consequence of their sins. A scourge is senseless and monstrous in itself, as the invasion by the Philistines in Biblical history, and to be understood only as a reaction. But the Soviet is, on the other hand, also part of the Christian democratic world; it derives from it and shares the fundamental Christian concepts of justice, liberty and peace, to all of which fascism is opposed. The perplexity is in this dual fact, that communism shares with the Nazis the methods, but applies them in the service of ideals which it shares with the democracies. The logic of world history has thrown the Soviet into the camp of the democracies. As a fighter "for democratic liberty" the Soviet pays the penalty, like the other democracies, for her collusion with the evil.

Doom or Renaissance?

Lincoln was right: shall we not see in all this divine purpose? And is there any other explanation of our troubles as complete and profound as this one? We believe there is none.

There is danger, however, that one will arrive at a wrong conclusion from the right interpretation. This danger must be averted. Lincoln did not infer from the offense of slavery that this Union, with everything for which it stands, should perish because it was sinful. He inferred that the wrong must be righted, and that, because it had not been righted without education by woe, woe had been sent to do its work. Many conscientious people draw the wrong conclusion from recognition of our sins. We are not fighting the just war, they say, because we are unjust ourselves; let us take the punishment and go down at the hands of the Nazis and the Japanese. This, however, is an utterly egotistic way of repentance. If we go down in this conflict, it means

that the world goes down in an ocean of godlessness, that is, of inhumanity. The woe of the war has been sent us to warn us of our duties. It is still true that the only chance for the world is in those who recognize that justice, liberty and peace are commanded, not in those who mock justice, liberty and peace.

The Philistines were sent as a chastisement over the Hebrews. But the Philistines were nothing but the blind tools of the divine wrath; it was the Hebrews who mattered. They were far from good, they were unjust; but their eyes, not those of the Philistines, had been opened to justice. That is why the Philistines are forgotten, but the Hebrews live by the might of their prophets.

The analogy is not even exhaustive. The Philistines were the blind tools of the divine wrath, their eyes had not been opened. But the Nazis have been baptized, they are members of a Christianized world; they do know that justice, liberty and peace are commanded and mock them. Pre-Christian paganism was brutal but in a sense innocent; Hitlerism is incomparably worse, it is perverse.

Its perversity manifests itself in the use of all thoughts and achievements of civilized mankind for the service of its monstrous aims. To end the perversion and restore proper use and dignity to human achievements, is the goal of this war. *We are not just, but this war is just.* If we understand this, the war will make us more just than we were before.

Relief For Our Starving Allies

AT the recent biennial meeting of the Federal Council of Churches, an important resolution urging relief for the subjugated nations of Europe was unanimously adopted. It was introduced by Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin, seconded by Bishop Frank Sterrett of Bethlehem, and supported by all members of the Council who share the outlook of *Christianity and Crisis*.

The History

Behind this action lies a long history. In the autumn of 1940, former President Hoover launched a campaign for a wholesale feeding scheme for all the needy peoples of the European Continent. His campaign was immediately taken up by isolationist and pacifist groups, especially within the churches. The proposal was courteously but firmly rejected by the British Government. Officials of the American Government made clear why they could not accept it. Nevertheless, Mr. Hoover and those associated with him continued a determined propaganda in its behalf.

At that time, groups of Protestant church leaders,

including those who sponsor the present Federal Council resolution, joined in public opposition to the Hoover proposals.

In opposing the Hoover Plan, the church leaders pledged their efforts to explore every possibility of assistance to the stricken peoples of Europe in ways which would not strengthen their conquerors.

The Present Situation

In the intervening two years, they have kept watch upon the problem. They have maintained close contact with leaders of the Continental and American Governments, and with an influential and trustworthy group of British church leaders of which the Bishop of Chichester is the chairman, and Dr. William Paton the secretary. This group holds the confidence of the British Government and of the Governments-in-exile in London. From time to time they have represented to the Allied Governments their conviction that the time was approaching when carefully limited and rigorously supervised relief would need to be provided. As the Federal Council resolution dictates, they believe that that time is now here, and that measures must be taken.

These are the most important facts. Apart from Poland, Greece, Yugoslavia and parts of German-occupied Russia, the most needy countries of Europe are Belgium and Norway. In Holland and France conditions are not now so acute. Since Poland and German-controlled Russia are virtually inaccessible, and relief is going regularly to Greece, the two countries immediately in view are *Belgium* and *Norway*.

Belgium normally imports from overseas over 70% of her food. Since June, 1940, these supplies have been completely cut off. Moreover, as with every occupied country, the Germans have systematically and ruthlessly despoiled the land and have further drained the meager native stocks for the maintenance of their forces of occupation. Last August, the *theoretical* daily food ration had a value of 900 calories; less than a third of the minimum required to maintain health. Even this figure is theoretical, since it depends upon the ability of the people to obtain food. In consequence, health conditions among the whole populace are alarming. Tuberculosis has increased eight-fold, deaths due to tuberculosis have doubled. As always, privation works its tragic effects most heavily upon the child population. According to an authoritative summary in a recent letter to the *London Times*:

"Thirty per cent of the children have actually lost weight. The increase in weight of the majority of the rest is forty per cent below normal. . . . In certain districts, the loss of weight of the large majority ranges from four to thirty pounds.

Cases of acute anaemia, oedema in the legs, fainting, swollen glands are becoming more and more frequent. . . ."

Unquestionably, the coming of winter has greatly aggravated these conditions. Unless immediate steps are taken to supplement inadequate rations, grave peril overshadows the entire youth of Belgium. While detailed data from Norway is not so readily available, it is believed that needs there are beginning to approximate those of Belgium.

The Plan

Mr. Hoover and his associates still advocate general feeding. There is no reason to believe that such a plan would have greater chance of acceptance than at any time in the past two years.

What is requested by the representatives of the suffering peoples and by leaders of the British and American churches is no such vast scheme, but merely the provision of such limited quantities of dried milk and vitamins (what the late Lord Lothian named "medicated children's food") as would give promise of staving off actual starvation and epidemics due to undernourishment from the child population.

In Belgium 2,000,000 children, some 200,000 expectant and nursing mothers, and possibly 800,000 invalids from food deficiencies would be involved. Shipments of less than 500 tons of milk per month and 500 tons of vitamins per year would be required. These supplies can be made available in the United States and South America. Money is at hand for their purchase. A ship is ready for their transport to a Portuguese port. There they would be taken in charge by officials of the International Red Cross who would ship them in sealed cars across France into Belgium where the relief would be distributed directly to individuals in most desperate need, probably at school buildings and dispensaries, by reliable Belgium Red Cross officers under the supervision of a responsible and entirely trustworthy international commission of neutral Red Cross authorities. Consent of the occupying power for every detail of this carefully conceived and fully safeguarded arrangement would be secured before it would be placed in operation. In the event of failure at any point to live up to the specifications of the plan, its operation would cease.

This proposal is an almost exact parallel to the scheme which has been in operation for many months for the relief of starvation in Greece. As the Federal Council's resolution states, all that is asked is the extension to other areas of acute need of provisions already tried and functioning to the satisfaction of the Allied Governments. As the Council well

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argues, "We cannot do less for the succor of others of our Allies who also fought valiantly in defense of freedom, and who suffer their present afflictions in the common cause."

Objections

What, it may be asked, are the objections raised against proposals so modest and so carefully safeguarded against possible aid to the enemy? Two objections are most frequently urged:

1. The introduction of any food into occupied territory will assist the Germans, either through their direct seizure of the supplies, or through their removal of additional native stocks. The evidence from Greece argues decisively against this objection. The plan is so carefully supervised as to make outright seizure well nigh impossible. The categories of relief, as well as their meager quantity, make any reduction in the starvation rations or additional expropriation of local supplies improbable. In either case, under this plan (in marked contrast to the Hoover proposals) the quantities of relief involved are almost insignificant.

2. The introduction of any relief into Europe involves a breach of the blockade, which is a principle instrument for Axis defeat and liberation of the enslaved peoples. To this objection there are two replies. So long as Britain stood on the defensive as solitary bulwark of the liberties of all, and pressed to extremity, no slightest exception to the blockade could be tolerated. But the situation is changed, both in that the Allies are moving toward an offensive when they will require the maximum physical and moral support from the subjugated peoples, and in that the plight of these peoples has become aggravated from privation to near-starvation.

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Secondly, the blockade has not, in fact, been rigidly maintained. A series of parallel exceptions has already been approved—shipment of medicines to Belgium, shipments of powdered milk and vitamins to France prior to the capitulation of Vichy, shipments of relief to Greece. Moreover, food parcels in excess of the tonnage requested pass weekly through the blockade to Allied prisoners of war within Germany.

The more serious obstacles appear to lie at a deeper level. They spring partly from the fact that the governments concerned have committed themselves to negative positions from which they are reluctant to retire, and are not fully facing the new conditions and factors which justify reconsideration of these positions. They spring partly from the fact that public agitation in support of relief has been carried on so largely by individuals and groups of isolationist affiliation so that the whole matter has become clouded with unfavorable associations from which it is exceedingly difficult to disentangle it. Hence the importance of dignified, moderate and reasoned representations now by those whose support of the war is beyond challenge. Those who undertake such representations are in good company. Many of the highest officials of both British and American Governments share their view that the hour has come when affirmative measures must be undertaken.

It has been well said, "The fate of the next generation in Belgium [as also Norway] does not depend on what can be done on a lavish scale in two or three years. It depends on what can be done, even on a small scale, within the next two or three months."

HENRY P. VAN DUSEN.

We have completed two years in the history of CHRISTIANITY AND CRISIS and are beginning our third year with this issue. Naturally the largest number of our subscriptions fall due during the month of February. In order to encourage prompt renewals we are offering fourteen months subscription for the annual rate of \$1.50. We are of course as anxious to retain all of our old readers as we are happy to welcome many new subscribers.

Author in This Issue

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